

SMALL BATIK HOUSE AS AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE BATIK CULTURE IN PRENGGUK, TEGALREJO GEDANGSARI GUNUNGKIDUL

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Abstract - *Prengguk Hamlet, which is located in Tegalrejo, Kapanewon Gedangsari, Gunungkidul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, is one of the hamlets in Tegalrejo that has diverse batik traditions. However, as the times and modernization progress, the younger generation's interest in the art of batik began to decrease, which threatened the preservation of this culture. Omah Batik Cilik was established as an initiative to overcome this challenge and ensure that the heritage of batik remains alive in Prengguk Hamlet and the Tegalrejo sub-district, Gedangsari. Omah Batik Cilik is a creative space for the Gedangsari Batik Cilik Community which has been fostered by the Astra-Michael D. Ruslim Education Foundation (YPA-MDR). This program is specifically designed to involve children and teenagers in learning batik from an early age. Through an educational and interactive approach, Omah Batik Cilik not only functions as a center for learning batik, but also as a forum to foster love and pride in local cultural heritage. This research uses a qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and literature studies. The results of the study show that the active involvement of children in Omah Batik Cilik has increased their awareness of the importance of preserving batik culture. In addition, this program also succeeded in creating an environment that supports collaboration between the old and young generations, thereby strengthening community bonds. Thus, Omah Batik Cilik plays a significant role in efforts to preserve batik culture and serves as a model for other communities who want to preserve their cultural heritage.*

Keywords: *Batik, Omah Batik Cilik, Prengguk Hamlet.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Batik is one of Indonesia's cultural heritage that has been recognized by the world. In fact, Batik has also received an award as a humanitarian heritage for oral and intangible culture and has become a characteristic of Indonesia's culture that has been recognized by *the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) (Ichsan: 2023).¹ The art of batik is not just a handicraft activity, but also an integral part of the identity and culture of Indonesia society, which is loaded with historical values, philosophy, and local wisdom. According to Indarmaji (1983:123), the art of batik is one of the cultural products known since the ancestors. The complicated process of making batik with motifs, its unique and beautiful colors, becomes a symbolic meaning, the reason why batik is admired and in demand².

In various regions in Indonesia, including Prengguk Hamlet, batik has become a hereditary tradition that reflects social life, religion, and community relations with nature and its environment. However, along with the development of the times and modernization, the interest of the younger generation in the art of batik tends to decrease. The influence of technology, globalization, and lifestyle shifts have caused the younger generation to be less interested in learning and continuing this tradition. According to Takdir Alisyahbana said that various aspects of culture are in a crisis stage caused by the meeting of local and foreign cultures that are mixed and affect each other (Alisyahbana 1985:52).³ So, this results in a decrease in the number of young batik craftsmen, which in its development can threaten the preservation of batik traditions in the future. Prengguk Hamlet, previously known as one of the centers of batik production, is also experiencing similar challenges, with fewer and fewer young people interested in getting involved in batik activities.

To overcome this problem, there needs to be an initiative that can attract the interest of the younger generation in the art of batik while providing the right education and training. Omah Batik Cilik is present as one of the solutions to preserve batik culture in Prengguk Hamlet. This program is designed to introduce and instill a love for batik from an early age, with the hope of creating the next generation who not only appreciate but also be skilled in the art of batik. Since its establishment, Omah Batik Cilik has succeeded in attracting the interest of local children and teenagers to learn and create with batik.

Through Omah Batik Cilik, it is hoped that there will not only be a transfer of batik skills from the older generation to the younger generation, but also an

¹ Sukma Ajeng Griyandari and Okta Niesha Ayu Fortuna Wardhannie, "Systematic Literature Review: The Impact of Batik Activities in the School Environment on the Preservation of Batik Culture in Generation Z in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0. Systematic Literature Review : The Impact of Batik Making Activities in The School Environment," *Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia*, no. 2 (2023): 2.

² Khikmah Susanti and Fahrul Azhar, "Introduction to the Batik Making Process as an Effort to Preserve Written Batik," *SENADA : The National Spirit of Daam Serv* 1, no. 1 (2020): 2, <https://jurnalbima.id/index.php/senada/article/view/15>.

³ Nuning Damayanti Adisasmito, "The Historiography of Batik Globalization in the Colonial Period and the Global Challenges of the Contemporary Era," *Journal of Nusantara Culture* 1, no. 2 (2018): 4, <https://doi.org/10.36456/jbn.vol1.no2.1577>.

environment that supports collaboration and interaction between various generations. Thus, Omah Batik Cilik not only serves as a learning center, but also as a means to strengthen cultural identity and increase community solidarity. This conservation effort is expected to be a model for other regions in efforts to maintain and develop local cultural heritage in the midst of the challenges of globalization.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to understand the role of Omah Batik Cilik in efforts to preserve batik culture in Prengguk Hamlet. According to Bogdan and Taylor (1993:30), the qualitative research method is a research procedure that produces qualitative descriptive data including written or spoken words from people and observed ⁴behaviors. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate to explore a deep understanding of social and cultural phenomena and interactions that occur within the small batik community. The data collection techniques in this study were collected through various techniques, namely:

1. Participatory Observation: The researcher is directly involved in the observed situation or environment which makes it possible to gain deep insights into the social dynamics and the context in which the phenomenon occurs ⁵. The researcher made direct observations of the batik activities carried out at Omah Batik Cilik, the interaction between participants, and the learning process applied. This observation is carried out in a participatory manner with researchers involved in several activities to gain a deeper understanding.
2. In-depth interview: An in-depth interview is a survey or method that allows the interviewer to ask respondents questions in the hope of obtaining information about the phenomenon they want to research⁶. In this study, interviews were conducted with teachers, participants of Omah Batik Cilik, parents, and community leaders to explore their perceptions, motivations, and experiences related to the preservation of batik culture. These interviews are semi-structured, allowing for flexibility in digging up richer information.
3. Document Study: Document study is a data collection method that involves analyzing and researching documents that are relevant to the research topic⁷. Relevant documents, such as activity notes, training curriculum, and progress reports of Omah Batik Cilik, are reviewed to obtain more in-depth information about the program and its impact.

⁴ Zuchri Abdussamad, *Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Patta Rapanna, 1st ed. (Makassar: Syakir Media Express, 2021).

⁵ Saputra Adiwijaya, Anugerah Tatema Harefa, and et al, *Textbook of Qualitative Research Methods* Ed. Efitra, 1st ed. (Jambi: Sonpedhia Publishing Indonesia, 2024), 41.

⁶ Richard West and Lynn H Turner, *Analytical Communication Theory and Applications*, ed. Nina Setyaningsih, 3rd ed. (Jakarta: Salemba Humanika, 2008), 38.

⁷ Fatma Sarie, I Nyoman Tri Sutaguna, and et al, *Research Methodology*, ed. Orba Sadjana Manulang (Batam: Cendekia Mulia Mandiri, 2023), 98.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari is a community initiative that focuses on the preservation and development of batik art, especially among children and adolescents in Tegalrejo Village, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul Regency, Yogyakarta. The establishment of Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari is inseparable from the spirit to preserve the cultural heritage of batik which is one of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage that has been recognized by UNESCO. The inauguration of the Gedangsari Children's Batik House was held on April 3, 2024 by the Astra Education Foundation – Michael D. Ruslim (YPA-MDR) together with the Regent of Gunungkidul, Mr. Sunaryanta. The 'Omah Batik Cilik' building is a form of synergy between YPA-MDR and Asuransi Astra Syariah to provide a forum for the Batik Cilik Community to carry out batik activities, including as a pioneer of the Cilik Batik Edutourism Program, the inauguration of Omah Batik Cilik was marked by the signing of a piece of cloth using a canting containing wax by the Chairman of the YPA-MDR Board Gunawan Salim, Regent of Gunungkidul Regency Sunaryanta, and Astra Insurance Environment & Social Responsibility Manager Abdullah Kholifah. At the same time, YPA-MDR also inaugurated Diah Purwanti Sunaryanta as the Chairman of the Gedangsari Little Batik Community. Two Gedangsari Child Batik Community Administrators who are teachers of the target school and local craftsmen were also inaugurated⁸.

Omah Batik Cilik is a creative space for the Gedangsari Batik Cilik Community which has been fostered by the Astra Education Foundation – Michael D. Ruslim (YPA-MDR) since October 2021. Starting with 47 students, until now it has grown to 80 students from 8 target schools at the elementary, junior high, and vocational levels⁹. Thus, Omah Batik Cilik is designed as a handicraft tourism destination that can be an attraction for education-based tourism visitors. Visitors can practice batik by being trained directly by young batik makers. In it, tourists can also see premium batik works from small batiks. Of course, visitors can shop for various batik products made by local artisans with quality that is no less competitive with well-known brands.

Omah Batik Cilik was established with the aim of encouraging the formation of a community and some of the main motivations include the following:

1. Preservation of Local Culture

One of the main motivations for the establishment of Omah Batik Cilik is to preserve the culture and art of traditional batik. Batik is an Indonesia cultural heritage that has high historical and artistic value. By teaching and involving children in the process of making batik, it is hoped that this tradition will not be lost and can continue to be passed on to the next generation.

2. Community Empowerment and Children's Education

⁸ KH2, "Small Batik House Inaugurated, Gedangsari Has Batik Edutourism," Handayani News, 2024, <https://kabarhandayani.com/omah-pembatik-cilik-diresmikan-gedangsari-punya-eduwisata-batik/>.

⁹ Aditya Nugroho, "Astra Inaugurates Omah Batik Cilik as an Educational Tourism Destination in Gunung Kidul," Rakyat Merdeka, 2024, https://rm.id/baca-berita/ekonomi-bisnis/216073/BASE_URL.

Omah Batik Cilik also aims to empower the local community, especially children, by providing education on batik skills. This is not just an artistic skill, but also a means of character education, such as patience, precision, and creativity. Through batik training, children are expected to be able to get to know and love traditional arts better, as well as have alternative skills for their future.

3. Improving the Local Economy

With batik activities, this community can create batik products that have a selling value. This has the potential to increase the income of the surrounding community and open up local business opportunities, both in the form of selling batik products and in terms of cultural tourism. Omah Batik Cilik can be an attraction for tourists who want to learn and see firsthand the process of making traditional batik.

4. Environmental Conservation

In batik making activities, natural dyes that are environmentally friendly are often used. This is not only to maintain the quality of batik, but also to preserve the surrounding environment. By teaching the use of natural dyes, Omah Batik Cilik also supports sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

5. Development of Creativity and Innovation

The existence of Omah Batik Cilik also aims to encourage creativity and innovation in batik art. Children are taught not only to follow traditional patterns, but also to create new motifs and designs that are relevant to modern times. This opens up opportunities for the development of more dynamic and creative batik art.

Explaining the purpose of the establishment of the small batik house, it is hoped that the Children's Batik Community and the Gedangsari Children's Batik Edutourism Destination can run actively, in line with local government programs, and have a positive impact on the local community. Then, community participation is very important in influencing the preservation of local culture. This is in line with the opinion of Astuti Dwiningrum (2015: 51) participation as the mental and emotional involvement of individuals in group situations that encourages a person to be able to contribute to the group's goals¹⁰. Therefore, the establishment of Omah Batik Cilik in Prengguk Hamlet, Tegalrejo Village, Kapanewon Gedangsari certainly involves the active role of various local community leaders, including:

1. Inspirational and Motivator

Community leaders, such as traditional leaders, village heads, or elders, often act as inspirations. They can motivate residents to see the potential of batik as a cultural heritage that

¹⁰ Hansen Eka Cahya, "Community Participation, Batik Education Activities, Preservation of Local Batik Culture in Semin Hamlet," *Journal of Education Policy* Vol. 7, no. 2 (2018): 3.

needs to be preserved. They encourage the community to be actively involved in batik making activities, especially for young people, as a way to maintain traditions.

2. Facilitators and Liaisons

Community leaders often serve as facilitators, connecting relevant parties such as batik artisans, governments, NGOs, and educational institutions. They help coordinate activities, provide venues, and facilitate necessary training or workshops.

3. Infrastructure and Resource Support

In some cases, community leaders also play a role in providing the necessary initial resources, either in the form of land, buildings, or raw materials for batik. This support is important to ensure that Omah Batik Cilik has adequate facilities for operations.

4. Supervisors and Advisors

Community leaders have a role in overseeing the program and ensuring that the goals of the establishment of Omah Batik Cilik are achieved. They provide advice and guidance to maintain the quality and sustainability of the program, and ensure that the program runs in accordance with local norms and values.

5. Drivers of Community Participation

With its influence, community leaders can encourage active participation from residents, especially parents, to support Omah Batik Cilik. They invite parents to support their children in learning batik, so that this skill can be passed on to the next generation. With the active role of community leaders, the establishment of Omah Batik Cilik in Gedangsari is expected to run successfully, become a center for education and preservation of batik culture for children, as well as raise local potential to improve the welfare of the local community.

After its establishment, Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari organized various activities aimed at teaching, preserving, and promoting batik art. Some of its main activities include:

1. Exhibition and Sale of Works

Children's batik works are exhibited and sold at certain events, both at the local and regional levels. This exhibition not only introduces their works to the wider community but also provides appreciation and motivation for children. The sale of batik works is also a means to teach entrepreneurial aspects and raise funds for the sustainability of Omah Batik Cilik's activities.



Pict.1 Batik Works Exhibition

2. Educational Activities in Schools and Communities

Omah Batik Cilik collaborates with schools around Gedangsari to incorporate batik art into the curriculum or extracurricular activities. In addition, they also hold educational and socialization programs about batik to the general public, with the aim of increasing awareness and pride in batik cultural heritage.



Pict.2 Batik Education and Socialization Program

3. Creativity and Innovation Workshop

In addition to basic training, Omah Batik Cilik also held a workshop that encouraged children to create creative and innovative new batik motifs. The workshop aims to foster children's creativity and encourage them to explore motives that may be inspired by their surroundings, folklore, or their own imagination.



Pict.3 Batik Technical Guidance Workshop

Meanwhile, the impact felt by the establishment of Omah Batik Cilik plays an important role in developing the skills and creativity of children and adolescents in Gedangsari. Through various training programs and workshops, children are taught

batik techniques from basic to advanced. They learn to make designs, use canting, and the coloring process. In addition, creativity and innovation workshops encourage them to create new unique and original motifs. This activity not only improves their technical skills but also fosters a sense of pride in the local cultural heritage. Children involved in the program get the opportunity to express themselves through the art of batik, which in turn can improve their confidence and creative thinking skills

Omah Batik Cilik also contributes to the economic empowerment of the local community. By exhibiting and selling children's batik works at various events, they not only introduce their products to the wider community but also teach the entrepreneurial aspect to children. The sale of these batik works helps raise funds for the sustainability of Omah Batik Cilik activities and provides additional income for the families of the children involved. Since its establishment, Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari has had a significant positive impact on the preservation of batik art and local economic empowerment. Many children have successfully mastered the skill of batik, which not only enriches them culturally but also opens up new economic opportunities. In addition, the existence of Omah Batik Cilik has also helped increase public awareness of the importance of preserving batik cultural heritage.

With various kinds of challenges faced by Omah Batik Cilik is an initiative or solution that aims to preserve the art of batik among the younger generation. However, as the times develop, it is necessary to anticipate in facing various challenges in the future, so it needs to be overcome to achieve its goals. So, here are the main challenges faced by Omah Batik Cilik and the solutions that have been proposed to overcome these challenges,

1. Lack of Interest of the Young Generation in Batik Making

Attracting children's interest in learning batik can be a challenge in itself. Children may be more interested in other activities that are considered more modern or fun. So the solutions in facing these challenges include: a. Educational and Interactive Approach

Make batik activities more interesting with an educational and interactive approach, such as using digital technology for batik design or holding batik design competitions.

- b. Integration with the School Curriculum

Collaborate with schools to incorporate the art of batik into the curriculum or extracurricular activities, so that children can learn batik as part of school activities.

- c. Role Model and Inspiration

Inviting famous batik artists or influencers to share their experiences and inspire children about the importance of preserving batik culture.

2. Human Resource Limitations

The limited number of teachers and experts in the art of batik can hinder the implementation of batik programs and activities. Additionally, existing teachers may need additional training to improve their teaching skills and methods. So the solutions in facing these challenges include

- a. Training and Development
 - Conducting training programs for teachers to improve their skills in batik making and teaching methods.
 - b. Cooperation with Educational Institutions
 - Collaborate with educational institutions or training institutions to get support in the form of teaching staff or training for existing teachers.
 - c. Volunteers and Internships
 - Inviting volunteers or students who are interested in batik art to be involved in Omah Batik Cilik activities as teachers or assistants.
3. Lack of Marketing Access to Batik Products
- Although children's batik works are exhibited and sold at certain events, access to a wider market is still a challenge. This can limit their potential income and introduction of batik products². So the solutions in facing these challenges include
- a. Digital Marketing
 - Utilizing digital platforms such as social media and e-commerce to market and sell batik products online.
 - b. Exhibitions and Bazaars
 - Participating in exhibitions and bazaars at the national and international levels to expand the network and market.
 - c. Partnerships with Stores and Galleries
 - Establish partnerships with shops, art galleries, and boutiques to sell batik products on a consignment basis.
4. Cultural Preservation and Innovation
- Maintaining a balance between the preservation of traditional batik motifs and the innovation of new motifs can be challenging. Too much focus on innovation can obscure traditional values, while too much focus on tradition can make batik less attractive to the younger generation. So the solutions in facing these challenges include
- a. Education about the History of Batik
 - Integrate education about the history and cultural values of batik in each training to foster a sense of pride and responsibility in preserving cultural heritage.
 - b. Targeted Innovation
 - Encouraging innovation that still respects and integrates traditional elements of batik, so as to produce unique works that are still rooted in tradition.

In addition to this, from the results of the interviews, data was also obtained that Omah Batik Cilik has succeeded in becoming an effective means of involving various levels of society to preserve batik culture. The program not only teaches technical skills, but also fosters awareness of the importance of cultural identity from an early age. The enthusiasm of the participants, the support of parents, and the appreciation from community leaders indicate that this initiative has the

potential to develop further and become an example of cultural preservation in other regions. Initiatives such as Omah Batik Cilik are essential to ensure that the younger generation remains connected to their cultural heritage amid the growing tide of modernization.

The management of Omah Batik Cilik explained that this initiative started from concerns about the decrease in interest in developing batik skills in their village. According to Mas Rizki, who is one of the administrators of the small batik house, he revealed that children are the key to cultural sustainability, so involving them from an early age is very important. This program is designed not only to teach batik techniques, but also to instill local cultural values and identity to the younger generation. Students and Children involved in the program also showed high enthusiasm. They feel that batik making is a fun and challenging activity at the same time. One participant stated that he initially found batik making difficult, but after several tries, he began to enjoy the process. Many of them also admitted that through this activity, they learned more about the cultural heritage of their area. Not only that, local community leaders emphasized the importance of Omah Batik Cilik as an effective means of cultural preservation in the village. They realize that globalization brings its own challenges, especially in maintaining local cultural heritage. One of the community leaders stated that this program not only has an impact on children, but also inspires other residents to appreciate batik culture more. A community leader known as Dwi explained that:

"This initiative is very good, because it involves children from an early age. Our hope is that the younger generation will continue this tradition and Omah Batik Cilik will become the cultural center in this village."

4. CONCLUSION

Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari has had a significant positive impact on the preservation of batik art and local economic empowerment. Many children as well as the community have succeeded in mastering batik skills, which not only enriches them culturally but also opens up new economic opportunities. In addition, the existence of Omah Batik Cilik has also helped increase public awareness of the importance of preserving batik cultural heritage. In the future, Omah Batik Cilik is expected to continue to grow and become a model for similar initiatives in other regions. With the continued support of various parties, including the government, social institutions, and the community, Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari will continue to contribute to preserving and promoting batik art as part of Indonesia's cultural identity.

Through Omah Batik Cilik Gedangsari, children are not only taught batik techniques in theory and practice, but also instilled with cultural and historical values inherent in batik fabrics. This program is an important step to maintain local cultural identity, while building awareness of the importance of preserving the cultural heritage of the archipelago. In addition, this activity has a positive impact on the economic aspect, because the batik skills they learn can be a potential business in the future. In conclusion, "Omah Batik Cilik" not only serves as a center for

learning batik, but also as a means of cultural preservation that has a wide impact on the local community and future generations.

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